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Response to an Office Action
Ser. No. 09/475,531

receiving, at a network element, a telephone number and billing information from a set activation fee pay telephone, the set activation fee pay telephone associated with an originating telephone number;

determining whether the billing information is valid;

if the billing information is valid, then placing a telephone call to the telephone number received from the set activation fee pay telephone;

identifying the telephone call as having the originating telephone number associated with the set activation fee telephone; and

based on the identification, charging the set activation fee for the telephone call regardless of the telephone number.

8. (Amended) In a public switched telephone network, a method for charging a set activation fee to a caller using a pay telephone, comprising:

receiving, at a network element, a telephone number corresponding to a called terminating element;

receiving, at the network element, billing information;

determining whether the billing information is present within a first database;

in the event that the billing information is present in the first database, placing the telephone call;

otherwise, informing the caller that the telephone call may not be placed;

determining whether the telephone number corresponding to the pay telephone is present in a second database; and

in the event the telephone number corresponding to the pay telephone is present in the second database, charging a set activation fee to the caller at the termination of the telephone call regardless of the telephone number.

18. (Amended) A method for charging a set activation fee for a telephone call directed to a called telephone number, comprising:

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(3) *cancel*

generating a false dial tone by a set activation fee telephone;
receiving the called telephone number and billing information at a network element;
maintaining the false dial tone;
determining whether the billing information is valid;
if the billing information is valid, then releasing the false dial tone;
seizing a true dial tone;
placing the telephone call to the called telephone number; and
charging the set activation fee for the telephone call regardless of the called telephone number.